



NEWS RELEASE

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Woodland Hills Fortune Teller Pleads to Stealing Thousands from Clients

A woman who operated a fortune teller and psychic business in Woodland Hills has admitted stealing thousands of dollars from her clients, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Natalie Schachner said Melissa Lori Lee, 28, of Woodland Hills pleaded no contest yesterday to one felony count of grand theft and agreed to pay restitution to the eight victims named in case LA085186.

Lee made an initial \$20,000 restitution payment after entering the plea. Sentencing is scheduled for February 8, 2018 in Department 122 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Van Nuys Branch.

The defendant will face anywhere from one year and four months in state prison to three years of formal probation. The amount of prison time will depend on the restitution amounts paid before sentencing.

Lee stole more than \$200,000 in a time period spanning from January 2014 to June 2015, the prosecutor said. The eight victims were clients of the fortune telling business located on the 5200 block of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the prosecutor added.

The defendant convinced victims that were going through significant hardships to give her the money on the pretense that they would be receiving their money back once Lee's spiritual "work" was done, the prosecutor said. When months passed and these individuals began to ask for their money back, Lee stopped returning their texts and calls, the prosecutor added.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department, Topanga Station.

About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.